

45711



*General
Assembly*
Pronouncements
1955

Social Deliverances

of the 167th General Assembly

SOCIAL PROGRESS

•

JULY 1955



Social Progress

Vol. XLV, No. 11

Published by the Department of Social Education and Action of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., to provide a forum for the Church on subjects of social concern for Christians. It includes program resources, legislative developments, and guides to worship, study, and action for leaders of social action groups in local churches, presbyteries, synods, presbyterial and synodical societies. Articles represent the opinions of the authors—not the official policy of the Department of Social Education and Action or of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Special Issue

JULY, 1955

Department of Social Education and Action: Clifford Earle, Secretary and Editor; Margaret E. Kuhn, Associate Secretary and Editor; H. B. Sissel, Associate Secretary; Marshal L. Scott, Industrial Relations Consultant; Helen H. Harder, Editorial Assistant; Helen Lineweaver, Director of Washington Office.

Counseling Committee on Social Education and Action: Joseph J. Copeland, Mrs. Edward Fisher, Arthur W. Mielke, Henry Lee Willet, Frank T. Wilson, Chairman, Paul S. Wright; Mrs. Roland P. Beattie, Richard Pacini, Shelby Rooks; Walter H. Eastwood, John A. Mackay; Emery Bacon, Mrs. Werner J. Blanchard, C. Elwood Boulware, Herbert N. Brockway, William Adams Brown, Jr., Burton Fowler, Paul K. Justus, Paul Lehmann, Franc L. McCluer, Mrs. Harold R. Tolliver, Edmund S. Wolfe, and William F. Zuurdeeg.

Published monthly, except August, by the Department of Social Education and Action of the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, at 1009 Sloan St., Crawfordsville, Indiana. Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Crawfordsville, Indiana, under the act of March 3, 1879.

Editorial and Executive office, 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

Subscriptions, \$1.00 a year; three years for \$2.50. Single copy, 15 cents. Group rates on request.

Send subscriptions to 830 Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

Copyright, 1955, by the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

Social Pronouncements
of the
167th General Assembly
of the
Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.



**As adopted from the Report of the Standing Committee on Social
Education and Action in Los Angeles, California, May 24, 1955**

Contents

From This Vantage Point.....	3
General Assembly Speaks.....	5
In the Making.....	17
How Binding Are They?.....	22
From Pronouncements to Program.....	26

FROM THIS VANTAGE POINT . . .

The Church Speaks

THE social deliverances of the 167th General Assembly deserve careful reading and study on the part of every minister and every church officer and leader. The reading of them should be followed by appropriate decision and action.

The 1955 deliverances embrace four major and four minor subjects.

The first major emphasis is on the religious and theological ground for social education and action. The statement affirms the responsibility of both the Church as a corporate body (the body of Christ) and individual Christians to "take sides in the struggle between *light* and *darkness*." It is interesting and instructive to compare this preamble with the opening statement, also dealing with the theological ground for social witness, of the 1953 General Assembly pronouncements.

The second major theme is international affairs. This is appropriate because of (1) the continuing of the cold war; (2) frequent crises in international relations; (3) the tenth anniversary of the United Nations, which to a large degree embodies the hope of the nations for peace. The General Assembly calls upon the National Council of Churches to take leadership in a nation-wide program of education and action for peace.

The third emphasis of major importance has to do with racial and cultural relations. The General Assembly calls for the launching of "operation desegregation" in our churches and in various Church-related institutions. Reference is made to the recommendation of the General Council implementing the concept of an "inclusive membership" in our churches. This recommendation, which was adopted by the General Assembly and ordered to be transmitted by the Stated Clerk to the presbyteries, is probably the most advanced statement on the responsibility of the churches in race relations ever to be approved by a Church body. *The statement declares it to be the policy of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. that every local congregation should be an inclusive fellowship.*

The fourth major emphasis in the pronouncements concerns the local church and its program of social education and action. The point is made that the witness of the Church and the duty of Christians in relation to social issues should be duly emphasized in the ongoing program—the minister's preaching, church officer training, leadership education, communicants' classes, age group activities, community outreach.

The four minor themes in the social deliverances have to do with the responsibility of Christians in the area of citizenship, with the fundamental issues of freedom and civil liberties, with a proposed study project in the field of economic life, and with issues in the field of community relations.

We predict that the closing sentence in the pronouncements will be widely appreciated and frequently quoted: "Let us face the fact that if we can't learn to love, we don't deserve to live, and probably won't."

A Continuing Process

The General Assembly pronouncements are the *result* of a process, continuing over several months and involving the participation of a large number of people. All this is explained in the article "In the Making," pages 17-21.

We would like to suggest that the pronouncements are also the *beginning* of a process. They are intended to be used, to set in motion programs of witness and action in every local church.

—Clifford Earle,
Margaret Kuhn,
H. B. Sissel

General Assembly Speaks

• *Social Pronouncements of the 167th General Assembly*

“The Ground on Which We Stand”

A basic conviction of our Christian faith is that “man’s chief end is to glorify God.” This implies not only the worship of God, but also obedience to the will of God in all realms of life.

Another fundamental conviction is that God’s Kingdom is present and coming. We believe (1) that we live in a world which is under God’s dominion, but where man is often in rebellion against his purposes; (2) that God, in Christ, has established his Kingly power in this world; and (3) that God, in Christ, calls us to work with him.

We believe that the Christian interpretation of life, and the judgment of God in the affairs of men, require the elimination of racism, idolatrous nationalism, Communism and other forms of totalitarian heresy.

Therefore neither the Church as the body of Christ, nor Christians as individuals, can be indifferent or neutral toward the evil influences in our world. We must take sides in the struggle between *light* and *darkness*, recognizing that in all our decisions we too are under judgment, and as Christians share responsibility for the sins of the whole world. Churches and individual Christians who seek to “glorify God” *only* through hymns and prayers and “living a good life” are sinning against their God.

Areas of Concern

We call attention to the social deliverances of the General Assembly in recent years, especially those dealing with international affairs, foreign aid, colonialism, immigration, refugee resettlement, freedom and civil liberties, Indian affairs, agricultural surpluses, migratory farm labor, farm price policies, conservation and development of natural resources, industrial relations, problems of alcohol, gambling, housing, education, and other community problems. We commend these pronouncements to the churches for study and action.

Further, we commend the Department of Social Education and Action for the way it has interpreted and implemented the social pronouncements of General Assembly through the development of a program for the churches and through the corporate witness of the Church in the halls of government. We express our confidence in the able and wise leadership of its staff.

Christian Citizenship

In the area of Christian citizenship, the basic problem is that of the relation between the Church and the State. The principle of "separation of Church and State" implies that no Christian communion should seek privilege or power denied to others. On the other hand, this principle does not mean that churches should keep silent on, or be unconcerned about, political issues. If the purpose of "politics" is to promote the good of the community and the nation, then churches and Christians should seek to be an influence in political life.

Churches should act as the conscience of the community at all levels—local, state, national, and world. Denominations and local congregations should speak out on the problems of justice and freedom, equality and brotherhood.

It must be said that there is no single straight line running directly from the gospel to a Christian position on many of the complicated issues of our day. Of only a few political and social issues can it be said that there is clearly but one Christian position. On many other matters divergent Christian views are possible. On all questions of social importance it is necessary to relate faith to fact.

In the Presbyterian Church all judicatories and local congregations have the right and the duty to study and discuss social issues that may be called "controversial." They have the further right and, particularly in the case of the General Assembly, the duty to arrive at group decisions about Christian positions in regard to these issues. They have the right and duty to communicate these decisions to appropriate bodies when such decisions will help them carry out their functions in a free nation.

The churches, though not prescribing how their members should vote, should urge them to vote intelligently, taking ethical questions into consideration. Churches should help to provide useful nonpartisan information for voters.

Church members should be encouraged to look upon service in a particular political party as an effective method for Christians to witness and work for good government. Frequently they should be encouraged to ask themselves such questions as: "*Can I as a Christian vote a straight Republican*

ticket? Can I vote a straight Democratic ticket?" The answer can never be an unequivocal "yes" or "no." Christians can never give uncritical support to everything a party stands for or to every one of its candidates. On the other hand, they cannot avoid party participation lest they make their faith politically irrelevant. In any case, Christians should repeatedly examine party principles and practices. At all times, political activity on the part of Christians should be punctuated by prayers to God for forgiveness.

Christians should be warned that the greatest danger in politics is idolatry, when we let party loyalties play a larger role in our attitudes and decisions than our loyalty to the living God.

International Affairs

People everywhere today are troubled by the threat of war which in this atomic age would be a calamity of unspeakable terror and tragedy. People everywhere want lasting peace.

By peace we do not mean merely the absence of war. Neither do we think of peace in terms of great powers and power groupings poised in perpetual antagonism. Our concept of peace must be dynamic—peaceful competition with growing co-operation, which is more than "coexistence."

The United Nations—The attainment of peace requires structures through which the nations can co-operate in diminishing the causes of disorder in the world. The chief structure is the United Nations. We reaffirm and renew our support of the United Nations, not as a supranational organization, but as an instrument by which sovereign nations can meet together, plan together, and act together "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

We warn our churches and church members against malicious attacks on the United Nations on the part of persons and groups whose avowed purpose is "to get the United States out of the United Nations and the United Nations out of the United States." Honest criticism is often useful, but many of the current attacks on the United Nations are unfair and misleading. We need to emphasize the many excellent accomplishments of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in such areas as human rights; child welfare; education; health; relief and rehabilitation; refugee resettlement; technical assistance; economic development through international financing and trade, and the stabilization of employment; intercultural sharing and exchange; arbitration of disputes; status of women; agricultural education and research; demographic and social studies.

We call attention to the arrangements, under the United Nations, for the

supervision and development of trust and nonself-governing territories. We urge our Government to encourage and support all sincere movements toward responsible self-government or independence on the part of nonself-governing territories, including those under the United Nations trusteeship system. It is assumed that there shall be adequately trained, indigenous leadership to administer such governments.

We note that the tenth session of the United Nations General Assembly this fall will consider the calling of a conference for the purpose of reviewing, and possibly revising, the United Nations Charter. The Charter of the United Nations, as a dynamic political instrument, should be subject always to review and amendment. We believe, however, that the present world situation is not conducive to a fruitful review conference. The remedy for world difficulties does not lie in Charter revision. We call attention to the demonstrated fact that the United Nations, on the basis of present Charter provisions, has been able to make important adjustments to changing situations. Effective alterations in the functioning of the Charter are often possible by the methods of reinterpretation and supplementary agreements.

We hail the United Nations as it celebrates its tenth anniversary in October, 1955. We call upon our churches to observe the anniversary in appropriate ways, and to co-operate in community celebrations.

We note with genuine appreciation the donation of a large rug to the United Nations by the Women's Organizations of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. This rug, now being woven in Quito, Ecuador, will be used in a large hall at the United Nations headquarters in New York. There will be an appropriate presentation ceremony on September 13, 1955.

International Negotiations—It is our profound conviction that, where difficulties arise in the relations between nations, there can be no true substitute for direct conference and negotiation between them if a constructive settlement is to be achieved. This is equally true whatever be the record of friendship or antagonism between the parties concerned.

We rejoice therefore in the determination of our Government to negotiate the grave issues which cause difficulties in our relations with Communist countries. We believe that this can be done with honor to our nation and without appeasement. We also believe that, as far as possible, crucial questions that affect the peace of the world should be negotiated "at the summit."

International Trade—We approve the action of Congress in renewing the reciprocal trade agreements program.

We urge our Government's participation in international programs and

organizations which work for the removal of discriminatory restrictions of our imports and exports.

International Reduction and Regulation of Armaments—We believe that lasting peace requires the elimination and prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction. We agree that negotiations for the elimination of such weapons should be predicated on an adequate arrangement for international inspection and control. We support the efforts of our Government, through the United Nations Disarmament Commission and in other ways, to work for the reduction of all types of weapons concurrently.

We believe that measures for the control and limitation of weapons should be related to collective security requirements consonant with the United Nations Charter.

We commend the President of the United States for appointing an assistant, with cabinet rank, to work for disarmament. We assume that his work will be done in co-operation with efforts already initiated in the United Nations.

The Use of Nuclear Weapons—The development of bombs using nuclear material has now reached a point so devastating in its possibilities and so dangerous to the life of the human race as to present a moral problem of unprecedented dimensions. We deplore hints as to the limited use of even small nuclear weapons, believing that such talk aggravates international tensions and may lead to actions which cannot be contained. The ensuing destruction would be an atrocity before God and would justly arouse the horror of the world and the moral indignation of mankind. We therefore urge extreme caution in statements issued by the Government or the military regarding the use of nuclear weapons, even in the face of the duplicity and inconstancy of antagonistic Governments which make pretension without confirmatory deeds.

Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy—We heartily approve the action of the Ninth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in unanimously adopting the "atoms for peace" resolution. Our Government also is to be commended for co-operating fully with such plans, and is to be encouraged to continue to share our resources and information on atomic energy for peaceful purposes. In this connection we call attention to the forthcoming "atoms for peace" conference to be held in Geneva in August, 1955.

Aid to Other Countries—We commend and encourage the increase of such nongovernmental programs as the Church's World Mission, One Great Hour

of Sharing, Church World Service, CARE, and CROP, for ministering to human needs in all parts of the world.

As for Government programs of foreign aid, we believe that they should not be trimmed down or withdrawn so long as they serve human needs. These programs should be (1) based on actual needs without regard to political pressures or military considerations; (2) developed in such a way as not to disrupt foreign economies; and (3) so administered that the aid serves the purpose for which it is intended.

We call upon our Government to continue its support, without diminution, of international programs designed to minister to human needs and to assist less developed lands—such as the UN International Children's Fund, the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance, and relief projects in Korea, the Middle East, and other areas of need. We reaffirm support of our Government's program of technical assistance and co-operation as being an appropriate and effective means of helping others to help themselves.

International Exchange Program—We urge extension and expansion of the International Exchange Program (for students, teachers, technicians, farmers, and others) as a way of advancing international understanding and good will. We call upon churches and church members to extend hospitality and fellowship to these visitors. This is a high privilege and opportunity.

Military Training and Service—While we recognize the necessity for military conscription in time of national emergency, we reaffirm the historic position of our Church in opposition to peacetime conscription and universal military training. We believe that the draft should be extended only as "the national emergency" warrants, and then for not more than two years at a time.

Call to Action—As a means of giving effect to "An Appeal from the World Council of Churches" [see SOCIAL PROGRESS, May, 1955], we request that the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. take the lead in co-ordinating among its member communions a nation-wide program of education and action for peace. We assure the National Council of Churches of the readiness of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. to co-operate in the development of such a program.

Freedom and Civil Liberties

The *bases* for our concern as Christians about man's right to freedom within responsibility are found in the Scriptures and in the historical Judaeo-

Christian tradition. Legal *guarantees* of specific rights are contained in state and Federal constitutions and are implemented by laws based on these documents.

Nevertheless, "liberties are only as stout as the will to maintain them," and there is evidence that they are threatened in the present climate of fear. As a condition of employment, approximately one out of five persons has taken a test oath, completed a loyalty statement, achieved official clearance, or survived some undefined private scrutiny.

It becomes the duty of churches to be zealous in the protection of the rights and freedoms promised by our religious and political heritage, and to be vigilant with respect to (1) crippling restrictions of the freedom of teachers in our schools and colleges to seek and expound the truth as they see it within their fields of competence; (2) the abuse of loyalty oaths where security is not a relevant factor; (3) the erosion of essential human rights by a narrow definition of patriotism and insistence upon conformity in social and political views; (4) infringements upon the rights of minority groups and of persons related to such groups.

A concern for freedom and human rights is deeply affirmed in our Presbyterian heritage. The widely acclaimed *Letter to Presbyterians*, adopted by the 166th General Assembly, was an appropriate expression of this concern. We remind the ministers and elders of our Church of the importance of our history with respect to human rights, and advise them to inform the members of the congregations, especially new members, concerning it.

Racial and Cultural Relations

As Christians we hold that all forms of racial discrimination and segregation are denials of human worth and are contrary to the will of God.

We call for the launching of "operation desegregation" in our churches and Church-related institutions and in the communities in which our churches work and serve:

I. The action of the Supreme Court of the United States with reference to racial segregation in public schools points up the failure of the Church to achieve true fellowship within its own life. The Church must act now to abolish from its practices all forms of segregation. We note progress already achieved on this front, but we must continue to work earnestly for desegregation with respect to

—local churches, presbyteries, synods;

—Boards and Agencies of the Church, at all levels—professional as well as clerical staff, and in the distribution of funds;

—local church organizations and activities, sessions, church boards, employed staff, and volunteer leadership;

—Church-controlled and Church-related hospitals, homes for the aged, children's homes, and other institutions, both as to occupants and staff;

—all missionary enterprises;

—Church-related schools, colleges, and seminaries, as to student bodies, faculties, and boards of trustees.

II. We call upon the members of our churches

—to work for desegregation in the businesses, professions, and unions to which they belong, and to urge the passage of fair employment practice laws with enforcement provisions in states in which legislation of this type is not already in effect;

—to work for desegregation in housing in their communities, private as well as public housing, and to refrain from entering into arrangements or covenants that tend to encourage segregation;

—to encourage and support all measures for facilitating the desegregation of public schools, both as to students and faculties;

—to seek the election or appointment of qualified representatives of Negro and other minority groups to public positions.

In the light of the action of the 167th General Assembly in adopting the recommendation of the General Council implementing the concept of an "inclusive membership" in our Church * we suggest careful study of this action and urge complete co-operation by each presbytery and session.

We direct the Department of Social Education and Action to record and to report to the 168th General Assembly the progress of the Church in "operation desegregation."

**The following recommendation of the General Council, implementing the concept of an "inclusive membership" in our churches, was adopted by the General Assembly:*

In a discussion in the General Council it was recognized that a statement is needed from the General Assembly which will aid presbyteries and congregations in the practical steps of implementing the concept of an inclusive membership in our Church. Therefore, the General Council recommends to the General Assembly that the following resolution be adopted:

The Confession of Faith, in the chapter "Of the Church," affirms that, under the gospel, the visible Church is "catholic or universal," and describes it as "the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God."

The chapter "Of the Communion of Saints" stresses the obligation "to maintain an holy fellowship and communion. . . . Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus."

Under the Constitutional provisions, we believe it to be the privilege and duty of the whole Church, and of each particular congregation, to present the claims of the gospel to all people and, "as God offereth opportunity," to invite and welcome into this "holy fellowship and communion" all who believe, without distinction of race, color, or worldly condition. This is the evident intent, also, of the action of the General Assembly in declaring its acceptance of the principle of "the nonsegregated Church in a nonsegregated society."

Desiring that our Church may fully realize in practice what we believe to be an obligation laid upon us by the very nature of the gospel, and recognizing that, in the circumstances of the present time, God does now offer an opportunity to our congregations to demonstrate the inclusiveness of our fellowship in Christ and thus to give an example to the world, the 167th General Assembly declares it to be the policy of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America that each particular congregation shall in its membership be an inclusive church, defined as a church that diligently seeks and welcomes into full fellowship and communion, without any arbitrary distinctions whatsoever, all those living within its area of responsibility who, confessing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, are prepared to accept the privileges and duties of membership.

In order that the objective of this policy may be more speedily and completely attained throughout the denomination, the General Assembly further declares its judgment that each presbytery should formally express its acceptance of this policy and should, in such manner as it deems appropriate, bring this matter to the attention of the session and congregation of each church under its jurisdiction with the following recommendations:

1. That each church accept the responsibility to minister to its immediate total community;
2. That each church be inclusive in its service and membership, seeking full fellowship and communion with all, without distinction of race, color, or worldly condition;
3. That whenever it seems wise or necessary to relocate a particular church or to merge it with another in a different community, every care be taken to assure that an adequate Christian ministry is maintained in the area in which it is now located, with due regard to the presence there of other Protestant churches, and that the requirements for such a continuing ministry be regarded as having a primary claim upon the facilities and resources hitherto available.

The General Assembly directs that this communication be sent to the stated clerk of each presbytery, and that each presbytery be requested to report to the Office of the General Assembly its action taken with respect thereto.—*Recommendation of the General Council as adopted by General Assembly, May, 1955.*

Economic Life

The Church has an important role in interpreting the gospel in terms of justice and a ministry of reconciliation in areas of tension and conflict. Improved co-operation in the field of industrial relations is encouraging. The growth of established practices in reaching agreement on wages, working conditions, and other issues represents a recognition of the responsibility of both employers and workers to maintain a balanced approach in the intricate structure of our economic life. However, some recent developments in industrial relations pose a possible threat to this picture and deserve careful study.

In 1942 the Department of Social Education and Action initiated an influential study in the field of industrial relations. The need for further research, broader in scope and taking into consideration new trends that have developed, is apparent. The 167th General Assembly requests the Department of Social Education and Action to conduct such a survey of economic developments in the light of Christian assumptions, principles, and goals. Special consideration shall be given to:

- (1) new trends in labor-management relations, guaranteed annual wage, "right to work" laws, automation;
- (2) national economic policies as related to Southeastern Asia and other less developed regions;
- (3) farm policies and the use of agricultural surpluses;
- (4) the conservation of natural resources;
- (5) the economic and social implications of technological and industrial advances in an age of atomic power.

We suggest that a study committee be constituted, and that specialists in various aspects of economic life should be related to the committee as consultants. Results of the study, with appropriate recommendations, should be reported to the 168th General Assembly.

Community Relations

Our churches still struggle with the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Their outreach, which may extend to the far corners of the earth, begins with the local neighborhood.

Co-operation with Community Agencies—It is important for churches to join forces with other institutions and agencies, as well as with other churches, in community planning and in serving various community needs

—so long as such co-operation does not compromise the Church's position in its witness and purpose.

Education—We reaffirm our belief in the public school system as an integral part of American life. We urge continuing support of dedicated school teachers and administrators across the nation.

We call attention to the growing need for additional classrooms and teachers in our public schools.

We urge church members to participate in study groups concerned with fair and adequate taxation to support the burden of increasing costs of buildings and facilities, and to improve teachers' salaries.

We reaffirm former pronouncements that Federal aid be approved to strengthen public education, such aid to be given to the states according to their need and to be administered by the states without discrimination on account of race, and without subsidizing private and parochial schools.

We deplore the charge that our public schools are godless institutions. A great deal is being done by teachers, school administrators, and educational associations to emphasize spiritual and moral values.

Young people should be encouraged to consider public school teaching as a Christian vocation and to accept the challenge of this kind of service.

We note with interest the plans for the White House Conference on Education to be held in Washington, November 28 to December 1, 1955. It is important that church members study the findings.

Juvenile Delinquency—The wide concern about juvenile delinquency highlights the need for interpretation and action by the churches.

Great care should be taken in analyzing available data. Disorderly behavior on the part of children and youth is always a concern of the churches, but the statistics on juvenile delinquency are sometimes interpreted in such a way as to dramatize the problem unfairly.

The churches should defend and encourage the juvenile courts which seek to provide psychiatric counseling, guidance, and other useful measures, in the place of the less scientific approaches of many of the criminal courts in dealing with youthful offenders.

Some communities and a few churches have developed effective services for the help of delinquent youth. The Church should call attention to such successes and help in every way to increase their numbers. Above all it should pay a high regard to the prevention of juvenile delinquency through an effective youth program.

The Local Church

We can obtain the results envisioned in this document by the witness of churches and church members in the legislative hall, on the street corner, at the polling place, on the job, and in the home.

We call upon every local church, through its minister and leaders, to give appropriate attention to social education and action. It is the minister's responsibility to see (1) that the session and other church leaders form a vanguard in Christian social education and action, and (2) that resources and leadership are provided to stimulate a continuing church-wide emphasis.

It is important always to underscore the Biblical and theological bases of social education and action, as well as our Presbyterian tradition of social concern. It is important also to see that this function of the church is properly related to other functions such as preaching, evangelism, and Christian education.

The witness of the Church and the duty of Christians in relation to social issues should be given adequate emphasis in

(1) the pastor's sermons, by stimulating an understanding of the reasons for Christian social concern related to an appreciation of the meaning of total Christian commitment;

(2) the selection and training of church officers;

(3) the education of leaders including church school teachers;

(4) communicants' classes, including the instruction of adult new members;

(5) the entire program of Christian nurture;

(6) the program activities of the church, including men's work, women's groups, young adult groups, young people's fellowships;

(7) the church's influence in the community through personal contacts with public officials, appointment of "observers" to selected community groups, surveys of community needs, and other useful strategies.

We urge every local church to form an appropriate committee to encourage and co-ordinate social education and action in all phases of the church's work. This committee should be related to the church's Christian education committee, and be responsible to the session.

Social education and action in the churches must help people to understand the makings of peace and justice. We must examine ourselves and our motives. Let us face the fact that if we can't learn to love, we don't deserve to live, and probably won't.

Respectfully submitted,

Leonard Odiorne, Chairman, Portland, Oregon

(The names of the Standing Committee members will be found on page 25.)

In the Making

• *The Product of Many Minds*

FORTY-EIGHT persons were directly involved in the process by which the social pronouncements were formulated prior to their presentation to the General Assembly.

They were members of the Counseling Committee on Social Education and Action (22 persons), General Assembly's Standing Committee on Social Education and Action (23 persons), and the executive staff of the Department of Social Education and Action. Half of these 48 persons were ministers; half were lay persons (8 women and 16 men).

Taking into account the attendance at the various meetings of the Counseling Committee and the Standing Committee, it is estimated that more than 800 man (and woman) hours were devoted to the writing of the recommendations and proposals which became the 1955 General Assembly pronouncements.

We believe that the process by which the pronouncements were prepared is almost as important as the statements themselves. The process is far from perfect, but we think it is a quite effective demonstration of responsible democracy.

The Counseling Committee

Consider, first of all, the role of the Counseling Committee on Social Education and Action.

This important organ is constituted by the Board of Christian Education as directed by the General Assembly. It is composed as follows: six members from the Board of Christian Education (one of whom is chairman), three from the Board of National Missions, two from the Board of Foreign Missions, one from the National Council of Presbyterian Women's Organizations, one from the National Council of Presbyterian Men, and nine persons from the "Church at large" including two who "represent" the Presbyterian colleges and theological seminaries.

These twenty-two people come from a great variety of backgrounds and occupations. They voice a diversity of political and social points of view. There is hardly a more widely representative agency in our Church. Yet it is more than remarkable that the Committee acts with such unanimity as it does. Issues are always vigorously debated, and conflicting views are strongly and ably sup-

ported, but when the recommendations are finally adopted, they are often given unanimous endorsement.

The Counseling Committee begins its work on the pronouncements in the fall. In mid-November a full meeting of the Committee is held in Philadelphia. At this meeting there is extended discussion of the social issues and areas of concern with which the proposed pronouncements (to be submitted to the General Assembly six months or so later) may usefully deal. Consideration is given to communications from presbyteries, churches, and individuals.

The Committee reviews in this discussion a resumé of issues with which the General Assembly has dealt in its social pronouncements in recent years. Tentative decisions are made concerning the form and substance of the proposed pronouncements. Appropriate subcommittees are set up to do intensive work in the selected areas of concern, such as international affairs, racial and cultural relations, economic life, community relations, and civil liberties.

The subcommittees carry forward their assignments during December and January. Much of the work is done by correspondence among the three, four, or five members of each group. Usually each subcommittee is able to meet at least once in this period. Often the group invites an outside "expert" as a consultant.

The Counseling Committee meets as a whole again in late January

or early February. In 1955, the meeting was held in Washington at Howard University. It was a three-day meeting attended by 16 of the 22 members. At this important winter meeting the various subcommittees present their papers. On the basis of these reports, the Committee formulates its recommendations.

The Counseling Committee meets again in a one-day session in Philadelphia, in mid-April. The recommendations are carefully reviewed, changes and additions are made as current events may seem to dictate, and the finished paper is finally approved for reference to the General Assembly.

The work of the Counseling Committee on the pronouncements is concluded when the chairman presents the recommendations to the Board of Christian Education. The Board receives the paper and transmits it to the General Assembly (i.e., the Stated Clerk). The Board's approval is unnecessary, and the Board has no authority to change or enhance the proposals of the Counseling Committee. It may, however, and sometimes does, transmit to the General Assembly an accompanying statement supporting the recommendations or suggesting alternative positions.

The recommendations of the Counseling Committee are published in the *Blue Book*, along with many other reports, and are mailed to all commissioners prior to the opening of the General Assembly.

The Standing Committee

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. is composed of about 900 commissioners (905 in 1955, fewer in 1956 by virtue of a new plan of "representation"). Half are laymen; half, ministers. They come from the 257 presbyteries of the Church. These presbyteries are assigned to 22 "electing sections" for the purpose of organizing the General Assembly.

The "electing sections" caucus on the first day of the seven-day conclave and select representatives to each of 15 different standing committees. The formula is unique. Each section chooses a minister *and* an elder for each of the 4 larger standing committees. For the 11 smaller committees, even-numbered sections elect a minister to the even-numbered committees and an elder to the odd-numbered committees. And vice versa for the odd-numbered sections. In odd-numbered years the order is reversed. If you are slightly confused by this statement of the formula, do not worry. The point is that the Standing Committee on Social Education and Action is composed of 11 ministers and 11 elders from the 22 voting sections, and a chairman named by the newly elected Moderator. There is no way of "stacking" the Committee.

This is usually the hardest working Committee in the entire General Assembly. The Committee meets for the first time on Friday afternoon

(the General Assembly having convened on Thursday). Its report must be completed before Monday evening. The Committee's assignment is such that at least 30 hours of intensive work are required. This means long sessions and late hours.

The task of the Standing Committee is to prepare a report, in the form of a set of social pronouncements, which is presented to the General Assembly for approval. The rules of the General Assembly make it clear that this committee is to base its report on the recommendations from the Counseling Committee and other papers referred to it by the General Assembly. Usually there are no "other papers." This means that the Standing Committee is not free, by its own decision, to deal with issues which are not treated in the Counseling Committee's recommendations. If it desires to do so, the Standing Committee may ask the General Assembly for permission to delve into other areas of concern.

So, in spite of the "rule," the Standing Committee has wide freedom to do its own thinking and writing as it prepares its report. The work of the Counseling Committee, however, is given most serious study and consideration. Very rarely are its recommendations disregarded or reversed by the Standing Committee. At the same time, it should be said that the Standing Committee does its work so thoroughly that its final report is entirely its own.

A member of the Counseling Committee is usually present in the meetings of the Standing Committee as a consultant to interpret and explain the Committee's recommendations.

The General Assembly Debates

The Standing Committee's finished report is given to the Stated Clerk who arranges for it to be printed (on Monday night). The printed copies of the report are distributed to the commissioners on the following day, at least twelve hours before the General Assembly takes action on the pronouncements.

The docket of the General Assembly provides an hour and a half "order of the day" for the Standing Committee's report. Most of this time is given to general discussion and debate on the various proposals. This is usually one of the most exciting sessions of the entire week. Discussion is full and free, and always vigorous. Amendments are offered, debated, sometimes approved and sometimes voted down. In the 1955 General Assembly, for example, several "weakening" amendments were resoundingly rejected; a number of "useful" amendments were approved. The final vote on the pronouncements (in 1955) reflected nearly unanimous endorsement by the 905 commissioners.

The Role of the Staff

The Department of Social Education and Action has an important role in the formulation of the pro-

nouncements. Members of the executive staff work with both the Counseling Committee and the Standing Committee as resource persons and consultants.

In the fall, the staff of the Department provides for the Counseling Committee résumés of former pronouncements and other useful data on social issues and areas of concern, and its own interpretation of the social needs to which the Church ought to speak. The staff also transmits to the Counseling Committee all communications from judicatories, churches, and persons. An attempt is made also to get reports and recommendations from members of the Standing Committee of the preceding General Assembly.

During the winter months, the members of the staff work with the various subcommittees of the Counseling Committee. The Department is often able to undertake useful research related to the work of these various groups. The Department has developed "working relations" with outstanding experts in all of the areas of social concern, and these contacts prove especially useful in this phase of the development of the pronouncements.

Members of the staff of the Department of Social Education and Action are fully at the command of the Standing Committee during General Assembly. They bring with them to the meetings of the Standing Committee extensive files of resource and

background materials related to all of the issues dealt with in the report of the Counseling Committee as well as other issues which the Standing Committee may wish to investigate.

It should be underscored, however, that the pronouncements are not "written" by the staff of the Department of Social Education and Action. Members of the staff are used by the committees and take part in the committee discussions only as resource persons. The Counseling Committee and the Standing Committee bear full responsibility for the reports they prepare.

Context of Prayer

Members of the Counseling Committee and of the Standing Committee, as well as members of the staff working with these committees, are always mindful of the serious importance of their work. They realize that the statements they are formulating are to become the voice of the Church on the sensitive and controversial issues of the day. They seek constantly to discover "the mind of Christ" in relation to these issues.

This is important. The process is designed so as to facilitate a quiet study and deep thinking by which the issues are truly analyzed in the light of God's desire for men and for the world.

The committees are bound to pay some attention to the "by and large" thinking of Presbyterian Church members on the issues before them,

insofar as it can be known or estimated. The consensus of Presbyterians, however, is not the determining factor in formulating the pronouncements. If the purpose of the pronouncements were simply to express "the mind of Presbyterians" on the controversies of the day, it would be appropriate to have Mr. Gallup or Mr. Roper conduct a poll. In developing their recommendations, the Counseling Committee and the Standing Committee desire not to express "the mind of Presbyterians" but "the mind of Christ."

The work of these committees is done in the context of prayer. The members constantly seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The reality of this is dramatically illustrated by an incident in one of the meetings of the Standing Committee of the 1952 General Assembly in New York. The members had worked for many hours—morning, afternoon, into the night. At one o'clock (in the morning) a recess was indicated. The chairman called upon the commissioner from Cincinnati, Dr. B. B. Evans, to lead the group in prayer. He did so, with power and eloquence. When Dr. Evans concluded, an elder commissioner from Mississippi suggested that the words of the prayer be incorporated in the pronouncements, and so they were—"May the churches see these issues as our Lord feels them, and act with courage to achieve his purpose."

How Binding Are They?

- *Guiding Principles for the Churches*
 - *Marching Orders for the Staff*
-

NO ONE has ever been suspended or excommunicated from the Presbyterian Church for his failure to accept or abide by the social pronouncements of the General Assembly. The Committee of Seven, which was appointed by the 161st General Assembly to study the work of the then Division of Social Education and Action, defined the nature of the pronouncements as follows: "The social pronouncements of the General Assembly, while mandatory for its handmaiden, the Division of Social Education and Action, are not binding on the lower judicatories. At the most, they are suggestive, advisory, and ministerial." The implication is that if the pronouncements are not binding on the lower judicatories, they can hardly be binding upon individual Presbyterians. This observation prompts the query, "What then is the use of having pronouncements?"

For any understanding of the value and function of the social pronouncements we have to consider briefly the whole question of authority as such in the Protestant tradition and, more particularly, in the Pres-

byterian tradition. Presbyterians, generally speaking, recognize at least four different types of authority.

There is, first of all, that enforceable and punitive authority which resides in the judicatories of the Church. The scope of this authority in the Presbyterian Church is specifically limited to gross, obvious, and provable breaches of Scriptural and ecclesiastical laws as clearly defined in our Constitution. This authority may be enforced upon any member of the Presbyterian Church who can be proved to have violated these laws. Such a violation subjects the person to various degrees of censure ranging up to excommunication. It is obvious that the social pronouncements do not fall within the scope of this kind of authority.

There is, second, that authority which resides in a group by virtue of its prestige and influence in the eyes of the group of which it is a part. This authority is obviously not enforceable by any external judicatory. It is, however, none the less forceful and persuasive in so far as the judgment of this body falls within the generally accepted limits of reason-

ableness and competence which may be ascribed to the group. For example, if my neighbor tells me that it is his belief that cancerous growths are curable in early stages, I may dispute his opinion or disagree with it without jeopardizing my own self-respect. If my physician voices a similar opinion, the fact that it comes from a person of recognized medical competence lends greater authority and persuasiveness to his opinion than I would ordinarily attach to that of my neighbor. To carry it still farther, however, if a large and respected body of physicians should agree that the successful treatment of cancer depends upon early diagnosis, and prompt and thorough surgical and radial procedures, and this finding should be widely confirmed by other competent medical bodies, that judgment would carry still greater authority.

It seems obvious that the social pronouncements of the General Assembly possess a good measure of this second type of authority, finding, as they do, similar expression in the correlative bodies of nearly all major denominations.

There is, in the third place, that self-validating authority by which any statement of truth, if it be truth, testifies persuasively to the unprejudiced conscience and the intellect of the man of common sense and good will. This is, of course, one type of authority that has always been believed to reside in Scripture, i.e., the

coherence and general consistency, the thread of continuity and integrity, which runs throughout the Scriptural record. Such authority and persuasiveness are, of course, recognizable only to the person who approaches the body of truth without previous bias, or, if he has previous bias, with the recognition that it exists in himself. It would seem that the pronouncements, in so far as they be true, would possess this kind of authority.

Finally, there is the only ultimate authority, which the Protestant and the Presbyterian recognize as the rightful ruler of the conscience of the believer: that is, of course, the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit. And again, if the pronouncements be true, and if the Christian be willing to submit himself to the testimony of the Holy Spirit regardless of how it may go against his mental and emotional set, they may certainly be said to possess this authority.

The authority of the pronouncements, then, will be seen to reside in the prestige and influence of the body that issues them, in the extent to which they appear to be self-validating and persuasive to the unfettered intellect and conscience of the rational man of good will, and, to the extent that they are true, in the power of the Holy Spirit to make his testimony clear to the conscience of the believer.

It has long been an accepted doctrine in the Protestant tradition that

God alone is Lord of the conscience and that ecclesiastical councils have erred and do err. Therefore, it becomes incumbent upon any Presbyterian to recognize the possibility that some General Assembly pronouncements may be ill-advised. For this reason, our Church wisely does not make them binding upon the conscience or the overt actions of any Presbyterian.

However, it should always be remembered that they are the results of the best thinking, study, and prayerful consideration of the democratically elected representatives of the Church. They are arrived at after thorough and honest study and discussion of the facts as viewed by informed men and women from many different points of view. They manifest a remarkable consistency of position and development through the years. The General Assembly does not speak its mind one way and then a year or two later reverse itself. Rather, the mind of the General Assembly, if it changes its social position, seems to grow and develop in the direction to which the pronouncements earlier seemed to point.

The individual Presbyterian who is concerned about serving his Lord should therefore give most careful and prayerful thought before he considers repudiating the judgment of the General Assembly. He has the right, with Luther, to repudiate the counsels of the highest judicatory of the Presbyterian Church on social

matters and say: "Here I stand. God help me, I can do no other." But he should also seriously consider the real possibility that the judgments expressed so consistently and forcefully through the years by the different General Assemblies, each composed of 900 laymen and clergymen and no two General Assemblies being composed of the same 900, may be right and true.

If the General Assembly pronouncements are not binding upon the individual, if they are not enforceable and are merely "suggestive, advisory, and ministerial," then what is their value and their function? They have at least a fourfold value and function. In the first place, they sensitize and, we would hope, enlighten the minds of the Church. They encourage study and awareness of issues where otherwise there might be complacency and ignorance. In the second place, they guide thought and sometimes even modify attitudes. In the third place, they provide a lever which the Church can apply to public opinion and government and by which the Church can make its witness in the secular world. And, in the fourth place, they support ministers and laymen who are taking action upstream against the popular and prevailing climate of opinion in their communities. That is, it is extremely valuable to a minister or his laymen, when in good conscience they must take a position or pursue a course of action that is

unpopular, to be able to point to the stand that the General Assembly of their Church has already stated in support of their own position.

The pronouncements are now an established and well-recognized procedure in the highest judicatory of our Church. Their usefulness and value have also been established. That their authority will be increased is to be hoped. They are not meant

to be an expression of the mass mind or the majority vote of Presbyterians and, for that reason, will not always be popular. They are meant to be an effort to arrive at the mind of Christ in relation to the great social issues of our time. The moral burden of proof rests upon the one who challenges their integrity rather than upon the pronouncements themselves.

Members of the Standing Committee Who Drafted the Pronouncements

Ministers

Joseph P. Bishop, Swarthmore, Pa.....	Philadelphia
J. Dales Buchanan, Maryville, Tenn.....	Union
Maurice E. Jones, Baraboo, Wis.....	Madison
Wayne A. Larson, Forsyth, Mont.....	Yellowstone
James I. Logan, Jr., Chickasha, Okla.....	El Reno-Hobart
William M. MacInnes, San Diego 15, Calif.....	Los Angeles
LeRoy Patrick, Pittsburgh 6, Pa.....	Pittsburgh
George T. Pratt, Wenatchee, Wash.....	Wenatchee
Delwyn R. Rayson, Mountinside, N. J.....	Elizabeth
James Van Pernis, Blissfield, Mich.....	Lansing
Alfred B. Wangman, Rochester 16, N. Y.....	Rochester

Elders

Ernest H. Bishop, Quincy, Mass.; Boston (Rubber Worker).	
Roland K. Fortune, New York, N. Y.; New York (Social Worker).	
Ted Lindner, Cincinnati 18, Ohio; Cincinnati (Teacher).	
Roger D. Minckler, Centerville, Iowa; Des Moines (Post Office Clerk).	
Miss Florence Piper, Buffalo, N. Dak.; Fargo-Oakes (Farmer).	
Howard Robie, San Francisco, Calif.; San Francisco (Director of New Church Development).	
Mrs. J. P. Simmons, Lubbock, Texas; Rendall (School Cafeteria Cook).	
Mrs. R. A. Skinner, Tucson, Ariz.; Southern Arizona (Domestic Engineer).	
George Stanley, Evergreen Park, Ill.; Chicago (Ceramic Engineer).	
Eben H. Watts, Kane, Pa.; Erie (Consultant).	
Dr. Morris S. Young, Anderson, S. C.; McClelland (Physician).	

From Pronouncements to Program

• *In Every Church*

• *In Every Organization*

EVERY member and every group in every local church can contribute in some significant way to the implementation of the pronouncements of General Assembly. Two 1955 pronouncements focus on these areas: international affairs and race relations. They are crucial to the commonweal and deeply challenging to our Christian affirmations; they merit penetrating study by every organization in the local church. Here we can suggest only a few of the many ways in which the pronouncements can be integrated into the continuing program of the church. Resourceful local leaders will think of many others.

Responsibility for initiating annual study of the pronouncements rests with the minister and ruling elders since they are charged with the spiritual nurture of the congregation. The Church's prophetic mission is basic to Christian teaching and evangelism. Let's begin with the session.

What the Session Can Do

• Review the pronouncements on "The Local Church" on page 16

to determine how the pronouncements as a whole can be used to stir a deeper social awareness and responsibility among all members of the congregation. As the session members evaluate the total program of the church, training for social witness and opportunity for social action should have their rightful parts or role.

• Schedule specific time for study of the pronouncements in the regular fall meetings of session. The section on international affairs is especially pertinent for October and December, in connection with UN Week (October 17-24) and Human Rights Day (December 10).

• Designate interested persons to work with the minister to outline the study course. Basic information about the UN, its specialized agencies, its accomplishments should do much to dispel the rabid criticism of hate groups. Resources for study should be made available to all organizations in the church.

• Authorize the mailing of this issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS containing the pronouncements to all church officers, with a covering letter from

the minister and clerk of session directing attention especially to the recommendation of the General Council on page 12 and the pronouncement calling for "operation desegregation." The General Council's statement is particularly significant.

- Approve and initiate group action. Members of the session may empower the clerk, for example, to confer with the newspaper editors of the town and program directors of local radio stations to secure more adequate interpretation of international issues—the work of the United Nations, the urgency of international trade and technical co-operation. Study of the UN might suggest other action on the part of a church board about UN Charter review. The recommendations growing out of study should be communicated to Senators and the Department of State.

- Recommend specific projects to various organizations of the church, especially to other church officers. Deacons and trustees, for example, can be encouraged by the session to take the initiative in helping to resettle refugees and expellees with assurances for jobs and housing. The assistance of every church is needed if we are to meet our denominational objective of sponsoring refugees. In a church in eastern Pennsylvania the session's committee on social education and action has taken the lead in aiding seventy-five refugees. Many

groups and individual church members have had a part in this project and are extremely proud of their record.

- Appropriate funds for the purchase of pamphlets and books for a church library and reading table—including the most recent and helpful materials relating to pronouncements.

- Support and encourage the minister in preaching informative and prophetic sermons dealing with international affairs and racial justice. Ministers and church officers have the right and duty to remind members of the congregation of their considerable influence upon the life of the community—and the world. No Christian can deny the effect of our high standard of living, our patterns of racial prejudice and segregation, which have alienated friendly countries and made even our allies suspicious of us. Such practices have seriously impeded the moral leadership which our country is expected to give the community of nations. Church members share the guilt and blame.

- Appoint delegates from the session to represent the church in strategic community councils or organizations, for example, a local World Affairs Council, housing association, council for equal job opportunity, commission on human rights. Encourage such representatives to interpret General Assembly pronouncements to civic groups.

What the Minister Can Do

- Explain the prophetic mission of the Church—how it serves as the conscience of the community, the nation, the world.

- Interpret the Biblical and theological bases for social responsibility and for the stands of General Assembly.

- Make occasional pulpit announcements in which excerpts of the pronouncements are read and briefly interpreted.

- Instruct new members and communicants' classes about the significance of the pronouncements in the prophetic and redemptive mission of the Church. Many Presbyterians, even active members and church officers, do not understand the true nature of the Reformed faith, the right and duty of the Church to guide its people in the application of our faith to daily life. Many people have remained outside the church because they have not seen its relevance to their personal problems or its concern for the larger issues in our society.

- Publish sections of the pronouncements as vignettes in the church bulletin.

- Write about the Church's prophetic mission in congregational newsletters, relating specific pronouncements to local and national issues pending legislation and other matters of public policy about which church members should be informed.

- Interpret pronouncements in church officer training to help all incoming officers to understand the nature and role of the church, its influence and impact on the community it serves.

- Establish working relationships with political scientists and experts in international affairs and human relations in nearby universities or colleges. Faculty members in these institutions of higher learning have many resources and will welcome the opportunity to make them available to church bodies and groups.

In the Sunday Church School

- Parents and teachers in the church school can be involved in "operation desegregation." Help them to face up to their own attitudes. All Christian education leaders in the local church should be exposed to the tragic effects of any form of racism and its blight on the lives of victims and aggressors. Classes and regular meetings of parents, teachers, and department superintendents should affirm our Presbyterian heritage of social responsibility, and our Presbyterian belief in the absolute sovereignty of God, the Father and creator of all mankind.

- Visual aids also teach important lessons in human relations. An excellent full-length film, *The High Wall*, deals with intergroup tension (Anti-Defamation League, 343 South Dearborn Street, Chicago 4, Illinois,

or your regional office; \$1.00). A social scientist or psychiatrist may serve as a resource person to explain psychological roots of prejudice and what must be done to remove underlying causes.

- Discuss the pronouncements in regular meetings of department heads and church school teachers. Relate the study of social issues in teachers' meetings to Bible study and basic understanding of the meaning of God's word and judgment in history. Help teachers to show parents and pupils that what happens in American communities has tremendous influence upon the peace of the world.

- Interpret the democratic process by which pronouncements are adopted to Sunday church school teachers and parents. It is important for them to understand these procedures as a part of Presbyterian polity.

- Use the pronouncements as guiding principles in determining church school policy about welcoming children and young people from the parish area without regard to race or economic status. (See General Council's recommendation.)

- Invite church school teachers and interested parents to contribute prayers and meditations on the human rights theme and brotherhood for a compilation of devotional materials which will be used in each church school family. Teachers of all age groups should mail these mate-

rials to the families of the children in their classes and find opportunities to stress use of them.

- Plan projects about the United Nations or international affairs in which church school families can participate. Each family might develop a UN hobby, have its own family observance of the UN's tenth birthday during the month of October.

- Suggest books, recordings about the United Nations—the recordings of folk music and songs of other lands to be used in church family recreation. Discussion about the United Nations can be introduced in family conversations at mealtime.

- Recommend the observance of United Nations Sunday in every church school class. Prepare a short announcement about the United Nations and Human Rights Day to be used in the church school preceding or following December 10.

- Work with women's groups, youth fellowship in sponsoring a series of church family nights on the United Nations. They might begin in October with UN Week and the tenth anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly and culminate in a church-wide observance of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948.

- Initiate joint meetings with church school leaders of neighboring churches to study common problems of Christian education and

ways to guide church school students to more complete discipleship and Christian intergroup relations. Share pronouncements with these sister churches.

- Give church school teachers help in counseling with parents or pupils who express any form of prejudice. Christian teaching and nurture in our Sunday church school should result in both changed attitudes and better human relationships.

What Women's Groups Can Do

- Use selected pronouncements as "spot" announcements in the monthly meetings of women's groups. The 1956 program guide for Presbyterian Women's Organizations, *In All and Through All*, outlines twelve monthly programs. Several programs have an excellent focus on the social responsibilities of Christian women. The Department of Social Education and Action has prepared a list of suggested pronouncements suitable for announcement in each of the twelve programs. Write the Department for free mimeographed copies.

- Set up bulletin board displays for each circle and association meeting. Pronouncements dealing with "operation desegregation," international affairs, community relations, for example, can be clipped from this issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS, mounted on bright-colored paper, and used as the center of interest in the display, related with colored ribbon arrows

to current newspaper clippings, recent magazine articles, photographs, charts, even cartoons.

- Develop worship services from the pronouncements. The social education and action secretary of the Women's Association, together with the key women who are responsible for this emphasis in the circles, might work with the spiritual life and stewardship secretary in the development of a year-round worship program for church and home.

Guilds of intercessors should receive copies of the pronouncements and pray for public officials and Christian citizens who support and influence them on responsible public policies. Persons in the forefront of social action need intercessory prayer. The world's deepest needs cannot be approached without God's direction and grace.

During United Nations Week, and in Brotherhood Month, each woman in the congregation should be encouraged to pray for peace and justice. Particular issues are highlighted in the pronouncements.

- Organize a Christian citizenship library. Use the seven SEA program areas for cataloguing the books, pamphlets, and periodicals. Make them available on a lending-library basis to supplement library expenses and buy new books. The literature secretaries and SEA secretaries should promote wide reading and informal discussion. Brief reviews of new library books and pamphlets can

be presented as thumbnail sketches for circle or Association meetings.

- Emphasize pronouncements and interpret the stand of the Church as a basic element of mission study. With the guidance of SEA secretaries, missionary education secretaries should study the pronouncements and related pamphlets, and become familiar with proposed legislation relevant to mission themes.

- Extend home and church hospitality to foreign students in the area and to servicemen's wives from foreign countries. These associations with persons of many ethnic groups broaden individual outlook and pave the way for still more inclusive fellowship with all racial groups.

- Interpret the pronouncements to incoming officers of women's groups. Explain their significance and authority, their usefulness in the total program of the churches, their guidance to Christian families in their daily living.

- Initiate church-wide observance of Brotherhood Month and United Nations Week with church family nights and co-operative projects.

Suggestions for Church-wide Observance of Human Rights Day or United Nations Week

1. Organize a committee representative of the organizational life of the church which will be responsible for co-ordinating and stimulating human rights and UN emphases in each of the groups in the church

family or in the congregation.

2. Talk with community leaders, persons who influence the opinions and practices of others in the community, about their interest in these two projects.

3. Work with local merchants in the display of UN and human rights material in store windows.

4. Enlist the co-operation of the public library in a special exhibit dealing with human rights and international affairs.

5. Consult with health and welfare councils, community planning groups, in studying the community in which you live in respect to its practices to safeguard human rights.

6. Join with other religious and civic groups in an investigation of local housing conditions.

7. List specific "things to do" by individuals and groups in "operation desegregation."

They should relate to basic causes. Prejudice is related to economic insecurity. Therefore programs that will provide fair and equal job opportunities are essential.

Prejudice is related also to lack of educational opportunity. Christian educators and public-school teachers should study job opportunities for youth. Public schools should provide vocational counseling and training. High school and college counselors should urge youths to train for careers for which they are best fitted, even to enter fields that are not now open to them.

Reading Suggestions

Christian Citizenship

Roll Call. Presbyterian Distribution Service. 10 cents.

How a Bill Becomes a Law. National Education Association, Washington, D. C. 5 cents.

The Christian in Politics, by Jerry Voorhis. Westminster Book Stores. \$1.75.

International Affairs

Every Church and Evanston, by Department of Social Education and Action for the World Council of Churches. National Council of Churches. 50 cents.

Basic Facts About the UN. Columbia University Press, 2960 Broadway, N.Y.C. 27. 15 cents.

Foreign Affairs. Published quarterly. Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., 58 E. 68th St., N.Y.C. 21. \$6.00 a year.

Common Sense and World Affairs, by Dorothy Fosdick. Westminster Book Stores. \$3.50.

Freedom and Civil Liberties

Freedom Agenda Pamphlets: *The Bill of Rights and Our Individual Liberties; Where Constitutional Liberty Came From; Freedom of Speech and Press; Constitutional and Congressional Investigating Committees.* Carrie Chapman Catt Memorial Fund, Inc., 164 Lexington Ave., N.Y.C. 16. 25 cents each.

An Almanac of Liberty, by William O. Douglas. Westminster Book Stores. \$5.00.

Race and Cultural Relations

"Segregation on Sunday?," SOCIAL PROGRESS, January, 1955. Presbyterian Distribution Service. 15 cents.

Everyone Welcome. Presbyterian Distribution Service. 50 cents.

The Protestant Church and the Negro, by F. S. Loescher. Westminster Book Stores. \$3.00.

Economic Life

Ethics in a Business Society, by Marquis Childs and Douglass Cater. Presbyterian Distribution Service. 35 cents.

The Camel and the Needle's Eye, A Study Guide for *Ethics in a Business Society.* Presbyterian Distribution Service. 30 cents.

The Christian Woman and Her Household. Presbyterian Distribution Service. 20 cents.

The American Economy—Attitudes and Opinions, by A. Dudley Ward. Westminster Book Stores. \$3.50.

Community Relations

The Church and the Community, A Discussion Guide for Members of Groups. 50 cents. Instructor's Manual, \$1.00. Presbyterian Distribution Service.

Guide to Community Action, by Mark S. Matthews. Westminster Book Stores. \$4.00.

The Local Church

Social Action in the Local Church. Presbyterian Distribution Service. 25 cents.

"General Assembly Pronouncements, 1955." SOCIAL PROGRESS, July, 1955. Presbyterian Distribution Service. 25 cents.

●

This issue of Social Progress is immediately available as a reprint. Order copies for your church officers, congregation, and study groups now from

Presbyterian Distribution Service

156 Fifth Avenue

New York 10

71 East Lake Street

Chicago 1

234 McAllister Street

San Francisco 2